Bayne-Jones Army Community Hospital

MEDICAL EVALUATION BOARD OFFICE

Soldiers Physical Disa

bility Evaluation System (PDES) Briefing

Purpose of Briefing

- To provide an overview of the Disability Evaluation System (DES) Pilot Program

- To inform Soldiers and their family members of the program

MEB Office Staff

Physical Evaluation Board Liaison Officers (PEBLOs)

SENIOR STAFF

- **Maj. Wanda Wade** **337-531-3702**
  - Chief, Patient Affairs/Deputy, Patient Administration
- **SSG Marshall** **337-532-3830**
  - NCOIC

- **Ms. Carol Hardy** 337- 531-3830
  - Supervisor / Senior PEBLO

MEB Office Hours

Normal Business Hours: 0800-1630

Front desk: 337-531-3411/653-2366

Fax number: 337-531-3259

CLOSED on Federal Holidays

MEB Office Address

Bayne Jones Army Community Hospital

ATTN: PEBLO

(1585 3rd St.)

Fort Polk, Louisiana 71403

Agenda

- Our Mission
- Purpose of the DES Pilot Program
- Basic Terminology
- Responsibilities of your PEBLO
  and the VA MSC

Agenda

- MEB PROCESS
- PEB PROCESS
- DISABILITY RATINGS
- MISC INFO

Our Mission

- **To provide you and your family the best care while going through the Medical and Physical Evaluation Board process**

- **To provide you with information that will allow you to make informed decisions throughout the MEB/PEB process**

- **To process your case in a timely and efficient manner**

DES Pilot Program

- **Military medical care provider has identified a potentially military unfitting medical condition(s)**

- **You are being referred to the joint DoD/DVA Disability Evaluation System (DES) Pilot process**

DES Pilot Program

- New disability process
- Brings together the resources of the two departments
- Evaluate, following a single comprehensive medical examination, your referred medical conditions and those conditions you may claim.
- Quickly deliver to you a finding regarding your fitness for continued military service
- If determined unfit, provide you with a single sourced disability rating determined by the Department of Veteran's Affairs

DES Pilot Program

- During the DES Pilot
- You will be counseled on the process
- Advised how you can contribute to the development of your case
- Advised on your rights and responsibilities are when presented with the results of this disability evaluation process

DES Pilot Program

- **Immediate benefits to you**
- **You will NOT have to undergo examination and evaluation through two separate systems (Army and VA)**
- **You will experience a smoother transition to the benefits and compensation available through the DVA immediately upon separation or retirement, if determined to be unfit for continued military service**

Basic Terminology

- APDAB - Army Physical Disability Appeal Board
- DVA – Department of Veteran Affairs
- ERB – Enlisted Review Brief
- EPTS – Existed Prior to Service
- FFD – Fit For Duty
- FPEB – Formal Physical Evaluation Board
- IPEB- Informal Physical Evaluation Board
- MEB - Medical Evaluation Board
- MMRB - MOS/Medical Retention Board
- MSC – Military Service Coordinator (VA representative)

Basic Terminology

- ORB – Officer Review Brief
- OSC – Office of Soldier's Counsel
- PDA – Physical Disability Agency
- PDR – Permanent Disability Retirement
- PEBLO – Physical Evaluation Board Liaison Officer
- PEB - Physical Evaluation Board
- SWSP – Separation with Severance Pay
- SWOB – Separate without Benefits
- TDRL – Temporary Disability Retired List
- USAPDA – U.S. Army Physical Disability

Responsibilities of PEBLO

- **Initiates your case file within 3 days, once profile has been received from your health care provider**
- **Completing Part I of VA Form 21-0819, VA/DOD Joint Disability Evaluation Claim, within 3 days of notification of need for MEB**
- **Forwards the VA Form 21-0819 to Military Service Coordinator (MSC) within 5 days after completing Part I, along with your medical records**
- **Schedules you for comprehensive counseling sessions throughout the processing of your case**
- **Keeps you informed of the status of your case**

Responsibilities of VA MSC

- **The Military Service Coordinator (MSC) will assist you in filling out VA Form 21-0819 within 5 days of the decision to start an MEB**

- **Forwards VA Form 21-0819 to Department of Veteran Affairs (DVA) to schedule a single comprehensive physical examination**

Medical Evaluation Board (MEB) Purpose

- The MEB Process begins when optimum medical care has been reached or when your physician determines you will not be able to return to duty
- Designed to evaluate your medical condition(s) to determine if you **do or do not meet the Medical Retention Standards IAW AR 40-501, Chapter 3**
- Documents your medical condition(s) and duty limitations
- Refers you to the Physical Evaluation Board (PEB), when the findings and recommendations stipulate you do not meet retention standards or when referred by an MMRB
- ***Does not mean you must be found unfit by the PEB or discharged from military service***

A Medical Board is NOT…

- A “MOS reclassification Board”
  -- reclassification is considered by the MOS/Medical Retention Board (MMRB) for Soldiers with P3 who meet retention standards

- You **WILL NOT** sit in front of a panel of board members.
  The MEB is an **informal** process comprised of at least **two physicians** who compile, assess, and evaluate your medical history to determine if your duty is affected by your medical condition

How long does it take to complete a Medical Board?

Our goal is to complete your MEB within 100 days. However, each case is unique and your MEB could take less or more than 100 days to complete.

MEB Process

- Your PEBLO will schedule an initial meeting with you to complete Part 1 of VA Form 21-0819 , if you have not already done so
- You will turn in your Health Records to your PEBLO at this time.
- Your PEBLO will prepare and mail the request for your Commander's Evaluation letter.
- The VA MSC will schedule a meeting with you to complete Part 2 of the form
- The MSC will forward the form to the DVA, who will schedule your Comprehensive Physical Examination
- Your PEBLO will refer you to other resources as required (e.g. Army Career and Alumni Program (ACAP), Army Wounded Warrior (AW2) Program, etc.) prior to any separation or retirement

What is in an MEB Packet

- **Medical Data/Documents Created in the**

  Support of Your MEB

- **Complete Health Record**

- **Personn** **Data**

What is in the MEB Package

MEDICAL INFORMATION

- **Coversheet** (DA Form 3947) – Lists all medical conditions stating whether you do/do not meet retention standards of AR 40-501, Chapter 3
- Narrative Summary (**NARSUM)**
- **Addendum** – An addition to the MEB if something was not included in the original NARSUM
- **Consults** from clinics you visited.
- Copy of your **Profile**.
- Copy of the Comprehensive Physical Examination done by the VA
- Copy of your medical records

Comprehensive Physical Examination done by the Department of Veteran Affairs

- You will receive one comprehensive physical from the VA
- List all medical conditions known to you
- Your opportunity to have all medical conditions addressed by the MEB to determine whether you do or do not meet retention standards
- Ensure the VA review for possible compensation for all your listed conditions

Consults

- If your health care provider(s) sees the need for you to be evaluated by another specialty clinic, they will request a **consult** with that clinic.
- **Please notify your PEBLO or Case Manager**

Narrative Summary (NARSUM)

The NARSUM is the heart of the MEB

This comprehensive report, written by your health care provider, provides a "word picture" of your condition, history and status. Furthermore, it provides a recommendation, such as Medical Condition "XYZ" is medically unacceptable IAW para 3-__, AR 40-501 and case is referred to the PEB for further adjudication

What is in my MEB Personnel/Performance Data**

- **ERB/ORB/PQR**
- **Personnel Certificate is completed by the custodian of your 201 file** (PSB)
- **Commander's Evaluation Letter**
- **NCOERs/OERs** (E-5 And above) (Last 3) (if necessary)
- **APFT SCORECARD** (Last 3 tests) (if necessary)
- **LES** (Current End of Month)
- DA Form **4187** (Name changes, loss of rank, promotions, etc)
- **RC Soldiers have additional requirements (see next slide)

Reserve Component Personnel/Performance Data

- Orders for all active duty periods – where injury/illness incurred
- Reserves – Chronological Statement of Retirement Points (ARPC 249-2-E) (commonly known as RPAS)
- National Guard – Retirement Points History Statement (NG Form 23) (commonly known as RPAM)
- Approved Line of Duty (if necessary)
- 20 Year Letter if you have one

If I am found unfit by the PEB Is there any way I can request to stay in?

- YES, you can submit a request for **Continuation on Active Duty** (COAD) or **Continuation on Active Reserve Status (**COAR)
  - https://www.hrc.army.mil/site/protect/active/epord/coad.htm
- Your PEBLO will provide you with specific criteria/details related to requesting this
- You can also obtain information and counseling on COAD/COAR from the OSC
- Generally, HRC is the approval authority for most requests
  -- G-1 is the disapproval authority for AW2 requests

MEB Process

- After completion of the MEB,
  - you will be counseled
  - and review the Board's findings and recommendations

- You have the opportunity
  - to seek advise from a Impartial Healthcare Professional when reviewing your MEB Findings
  - To seek advise in the preparation of MEB Rebuttal

MEB Process

- You can consult with a lawyer from the OSC or some other advocate before signing the MEB.
- The MEB will state whether or not you do or do not meet retention standards IAW AR 40-501, Chapter 3
- You will receive a copy of your MEB and supporting documents for your files

MEB DISPOSITIONS

- If you meet retention standards within the limits of your profile - returned to duty in your PMOS
- If you do not meet retentions standards - your case will be referred to the Physical Evaluation Board (PEB) for further disposition
- If the MEB is a MOS/Medical Retention Board (MMRB) directed MEB, and the results of the MEB are you meet retention standards, you are Returned to Duty

Can I appeal the MEB?

- **YES -** If you disagree with any portion of your Medical Board, you have the right to appeal it
- **You have 3 calendar days to submit a written appeal stating why/what you disagree with on the MEB***
- The OSC can assist you with your appeal
- Your written appeal is then submitted to the Deputy Commander for Clinical Services (DCCS) for further consideration. Your appeal becomes part of the MEB Board.

*Timelines may be different depending Soldiers seeking impartial of impartial healthcare provider's advise.

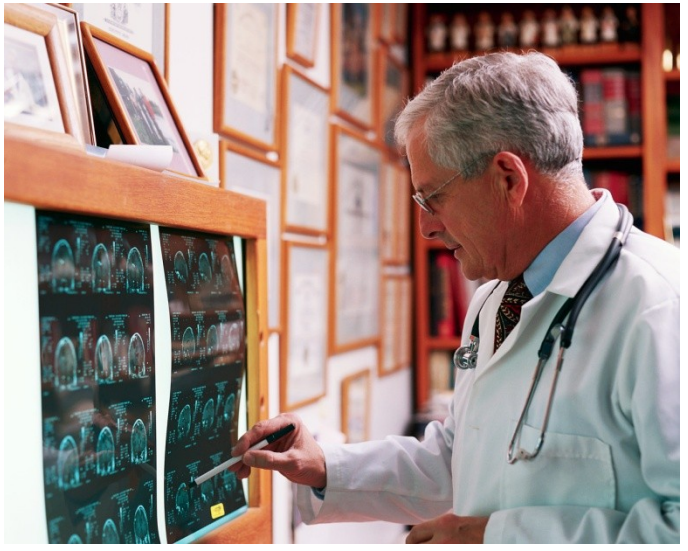
MEB Appeals

- The DCCS will review your appeal and make one of the following recommendations:

  -- MEB stands as written

  -- Can send back to health care provider for further information

  -- Can forward to PEB with attachments or additional notes



Special Note

- If you transfer from Fort Polk to your home station or a location near your home
- The Pilot program may not be conducted at that location
- Your case will revert to the traditional APDES processing procedures

Special Note

Example:

- If you transfer before your MEB or PEB is completed
- The VA will not rate your disabilities until you are separated from the Army
- Any unfitting conditions will be provided a disability rating from the PEB

Do You Have Any Questions About the MEB Process?

Physical Evaluation Board (PEB)

There are 3 PEBs - Located at the following locations

- Washington DC PEB
- **FT Sam Houston, TX PEB**
- FT Lewis, WA PEB

Physical Evaluation Board (PEB)

MEMBERS:

- President or Presiding Officer (generally a Colonel)
- Personnel Management Officer (field grade or Civilian Adjudication Officer)
- Physician (MC Officer or Civilian, generally with Army MC experience)
- If service member is Reserve Component (RC), a member will be RC
- Request for Enlisted, female, or minority member may be made through a
  - **-- request in writing through MEB Counselor**
  - **-- If approved, Board expands to 5 members for enlisted representation**
  - **-- May be 3 or 5 members for female or minority**

PEB Process

- PEB - the only board in the Military that can determine whether you are fit or unfit for continued Military Service
- Once the determination has been made whether you are fit or unfit, you will be notified and must make a decision to accept or disagree with that finding
- If found fit for duty, your case will not be referred to the VA for a disability determination
- If found unfit, the PEB will forward your case to the DVA Rating Board for a determination of the appropriate disability rating for all of your medical conditions

PEB Process

- The DVA Rating Board can return the case for additional information or clarification of data, in order to make a determination of the appropriate disability rating
- If unfit, you must request in writing to see the VA rating; therefore, you can wait to make your PEB Election until after you see the VA rating
- Only those medical conditions that render you unfit for further Military Service will be considered for determining your final disposition by the PEB

PEB Process

- Once the PEB has rendered a decision, your PEBLO will be notified
- Your PEBLO will schedule a review and counseling session of the PEB's findings and recommendations, usually within 24 hours but NLT 3 days
- You are given five (5) calendar days to concur or nonconcur (per DTM)*
- You can also consult with an attorney from the OSC to determine how you want to respond to the PEB findings; or, request to review the VA ratings before making an election

* Directive Type Memorandum

PEB Process

- You cannot request a reconsideration of your VA rating if you nonconcur with your IPEB. You can only request a reconsideration of the VA rating if you concur with your IPEB or after the FPEB

- The two (2) basic decisions to make when you receive the informal findings of the PEB are:

  -- concur or nonconcur with the PEB findings without seeing the disability rating; or,

  -- whether to request in writing to see the disability rating prior to making your election on the PEB findings

DVA Rating Board

- You must submit a request in writing to see the DVA Rating Board's decision on the disability rating(s)
- If you disagree with the DVA Rating Board's disability ratings, you may submit in writing a onetime request for reconsideration

Types Of PEB Dispositions

- Fit for Duty
- Unfit for Duty
  - SWOB (no % given)
  - SWSP
    - **Rating of 0%-20% and less than 20 YOS**
  - TDRL
    - **Rating of 30% or more or 20 YOS and medical condition is NOT stabilized enough for permanent rating**
    - **Periodic re-exams every 12 - 18 months (5 yr maximum)**
    - **Minimum of 50% pay for TDRL retirement check**
  - PDR
    - **Rating of 30% or more or 20 YOS**
- **Disability Compensation**: Your PEBLO will show you how to calculate YOS and disability severance and/or retired pay

PEB Appeal Process For Fit For Duty

- You are entitled to submit a written appeal
- You may request a formal hearing, as an exception to policy
- The PEB President decides whether to grant a request for formal hearing to contest a fit finding

PEB Appeal Process

- You cannot request a formal PEB to question any disability percentages provided by the VA
- You can only appeal the PEB findings of unfit or fit for duty
- If your disposition is "UNFIT FOR FURTHER MILITARY SERVICE", you have the right to request a formal hearing with or without personal appearance
- You can also submit a written appeal regarding your fitness for duty. You may submit any relevant and material evidence regarding the fitness of your medical conditions

PEB Appeal Process

- You have the right to be represented by an attorney from JAG or by a counsel of choice (civilian - at your own expense) for your formal hearing

- You may also elect to have representation from any of the various veterans organizations, if available. (DAV- Disabled American Veteran or American Legion). These services are free

Physical Disability Agency (PDA)

- Component of HRC
- Reviews and approves/disapproves findings and recommendations of the PEB
- The PDA may:
  - **Return case to PEB for reconsideration, clarification, further investigation, formal hearing or other action**
  - **Issue modified finding which could change Soldier's fit or unfit decision**
  - **If PDA makes any changes to the findings or dispositions, the Soldier has appeal rights (counsel + 10 days to sign)**

If PDA modifies PEB findings and you nonconcur, your case will be forwarded to USAPDAB for final review and decision.

Final Disposition
Physical Disability Agency

- PDB receives case from PDA and takes final administrative actions
- UNFIT:
  - **Transmits message to your Transition Center for disability separation/retirement orders**
  - **Assigns final separation/retirement date: “Not Later Than 90 days**
  - **Transition Center will publish appropriate orders**
- FIT FOR DUTY:
  - **Issues a fit memorandum to the MTF**
  - **The fit memorandum completes the disability evaluation processing**

What about confidentiality?

- **Your medical board is personal and private**

- **Limited information can be provided to your**
  - **THE FACT THAT YOU ARE UNDERGOING DISABILITY PROCESSING**
  - **WHERE YOU ARE IN THE BOARD PROCES**
  - **WHETHER YOU WERE FOUND FIT OR UNFIT**

- **Family members do not have automatic access to your medical records/board status without your written permission**

- **<u>KEEP EVERYONE CONCERNED INFORMED</u>**

How can I make this as painless as possible?

The PEBLO MUST be informed if you need to go on LEAVE!

Be Available

- **DO NOT miss any of your appointments**
- **Be on time, with your ID card, in the appropriate Uniform, and have medical records in hand**
- **NO SHOWS FOR ANY MEDICAL APPOINTMENT WILL BE REPORTED TO YOUR COMMANDER AND DELAY YOUR MEDICAL BOARD PROCEDINGS**
- **UCMJ ACTIONS ARE IN EFFECT UNTIL THE END OF YOUR PROCESS!**

Be Available

- **Always provide accurate phone numbers**
- **If you change units or assignments, let your PEBLO know**
- **Contact your PEBLO before leaving town**

Be Informed

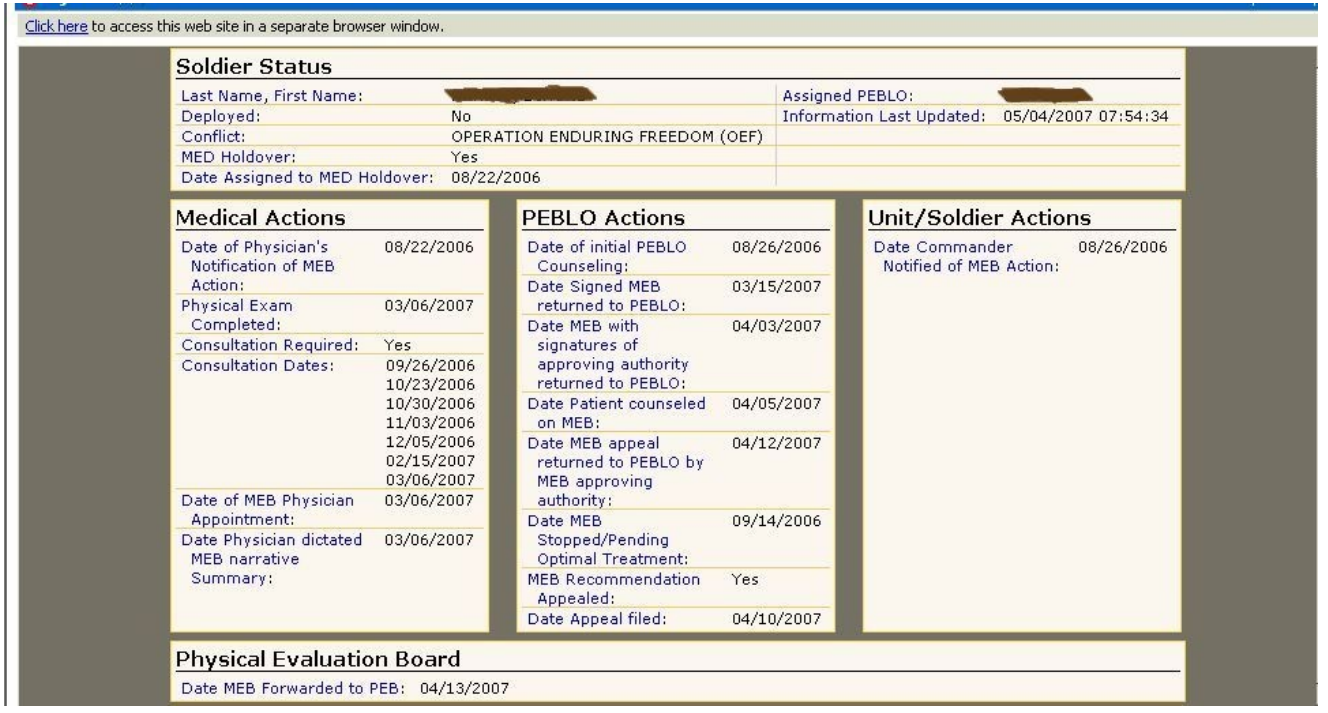
- Ask questions. Ask how long each step should take and follow-up. This is **YOUR** career and **YOUR** board. Take the time to review all documents for accuracy. Provide accurate and timely information

- **YOU ARE THE KEY TO YOUR BOARD**

- **IF YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND SOMETHING – DON'T BE AFRAID TO ASK QUESTIONS UNTIL YOU DO**

You will also be able to track the progress on your MEB via the My MEB Portal on AKO. If you have any questions about the data you see in the My MEB Portal, please contact your PEBLO

My MEB Portal https://www.us.army.mil/suite/page/41711



Click here to access this web site in a separate browser window.

Soldier Status

Last Name, First Name:	[redacted]	Assigned PEBLO:	[redacted]
Deployed:	No	Information Last Updated:	05/04/2007 07:54:34
Conflict:	OPERATION ENDURING FREEDOM (OEF)		
MED Holdover:	Yes		
Date Assigned to MED Holdover:	08/22/2006		

Medical Actions

Date of Physician's Notification of MEB Action:	08/22/2006
Physical Exam Completed:	03/06/2007
Consultation Required:	Yes
Consultation Dates:	09/26/2006 10/23/2006 10/30/2006 11/03/2006 12/05/2006 02/15/2007 03/06/2007
Date of MEB Physician Appointment:	03/06/2007
Date Physician dictated MEB narrative Summary:	03/06/2007

PEBLO Actions

Date of initial PEBLO Counseling:	08/26/2006
Date Signed MEB returned to PEBLO:	03/15/2007
Date MEB with signatures of approving authority returned to PEBLO:	04/03/2007
Date Patient counseled on MEB:	04/05/2007
Date MEB appeal returned to PEBLO by MEB approving authority:	04/12/2007
Date MEB Stopped/Pending Optimal Treatment:	09/14/2006
MEB Recommendation Appealed:	Yes
Date Appeal filed:	04/10/2007

Unit/Soldier Actions

Date Commander Notified of MEB Action:	08/26/2006

Physical Evaluation Board

Date MEB Forwarded to PEB: 04/13/2007

PDES Handbook

- You will each get a copy of the handbook.
- Please refer to it for more detailed information
- **Note that all information does not apply to the DES Pilot Program**
- Especially information about the rating sequence and some appeal and election rights will be different
- Feel free to contact your PEBLO at any time if you have any questions

DES Pilot Timeline Overview

Treatment

Service member becomes injured or ill

Dr. assesses and treats illness or injury

Up to one year

MEB Processes

Single Comprehensive Physical:

Physical Exam (45 days)

Case Development (35 days)

Admin and Record transit (20 days)

PEB Processes

Informal Board (15 days)

Formal Board (30 days)

Appeal (30 days)

Admin and Record transit (15 days)

VA Rating Decision

Single Rating Agency

Proposed Rating (15 days)

Rating Reconsideration (15 days)

Transition

Seamless Transition

Return to Duty

OR

VA benefits first day of calendar month following month of separation

Discharge Type

- PDR
- TDRL
- Separate w/severance pay
- Separate w/o benefits

Office Of Soldiers' Counsel

- Fort Polk, Legal Assistance Attorney – Mr. Robert Kirtland
  - 337-531-0635 Fax 337-531-8909
  - Robert.kirtland@us.army.mil

- Ft. Sam Houston/Brooke Army Medical Center, Office of the Staff Judge
  - Advocate:
  - LTC Romanick: (210) 295-0338, LTC White (210) 221-1044, SSG Stock (210) 295-0432 Paralegal, SGT Bennett (210) 295-0432 Paralegal

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QUESTIONS?

Thank you for Your Service

This Concludes the Briefing